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EDUCATION WEEK

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'Different' Tests Of Teaching Skill Planned by Firm

N.T.E. To Be Replaced With High-Tech Format

By Lynn Olson

WASHINGTON—Plans for "radically different" tests to licetise new teachers were announced here last week by Gregory R. Anrig, president of the Educational Testing Service, the maker of the most widely used teacher examination in the nation.

The new assessments, which will be available to states by 1992, are part of what Mr. Anrig described as a "full-court press" by the nonprofit testing firm to create broader forms of educational measurement.

Eventually, they will replace the multiple-choice, paper-and-pencil National Teacher Examinations, which have been in use since 1939. The N.T.E. is now part of teacher-licensure requirements in 30 states.

Unlike the N.T.E., which is given at one point in a teacher's career, the new generation of tests will be administered during three separate phases in a teacher's education and training.

And they are likely to make use of such technological developments as interactive video, computer simulations of typical classroom events, and portfolios documenting a teacher's accomplishments.

If successful, Mr. Anrig predicted, the new measures will mark the first full application of "adaptive testing" to a professional-licensure examination. Other professions are also moving in this direction, he said.

The testing company is expected to spend just under $2 million on the test's development during the current year, and approxi-

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In Shadow of National Races, Heated 'Education' Contests

By Tom Mirga

For several months, both George Bush and Michael S. Dukakis have been doing their best to convince the public that they would be the better "education President," as Mr. Bush has framed the issue.

Election '88

Meanwhile, nearly all of the 25 men and women seeking to be elected to their states' highest office next week are also trying to get word out that they are "education governors" or want to become one.

The 12 gubernatorial races have been almost entirely overshadowed by the Presidential contest. And the lack of attention has caused some to question

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U.S. English

VOX POPULI: Worker in Arizona unloads "official English" petitions. For reports on ballot proposals, see page 12.

They Also Serve: 'Experience' Sets Many Educators on Path to Politics

By Lynn Olson

These are hectic days for Jim Pierson, a full-time teacher and aspiring state representative. When the 48-year-old educator from Arvada, Colo., is not in the classroom, he is usually out walking his precinct, looking for votes in the upcoming election.

"School ends at 3:00 P.M.," he says. "I usually walk from 3:00 until 8:00." Then he goes home to take care of other campaign business or grade papers, often until 1:00 A.M.

"I do have an awful high adrenaline flow," jokes the teacher of U.S. history and government at Arvada West High School.

There are 5,961 state legislative seats up for grabs nationwide next week. And chances are that a sizable number of them will be won by educators like Mr. Pierson, or by educators' spouses.

In a 1986 study of legislators' occupations conducted by the National Conference of State Legislatures, approximately 8 percent of lawmakers nationwide

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Carnegie 'Units' Should Go, Says Study by Boards

Views Curriculum as Schools' 'Fatal Flaw'

By Robert Rothman

A national panel of state-board members last week called for scrapping a time-honored feature of the American education system: graduation requirements based on the so-called Carnegie units, or the "seat time" students spend in various subject areas.

The curriculum study group of the National Association of State Boards of Education urged in a report that policymakers replace the units with systems that require students to meet defined performance standards.

Dorothy Beardmore, vice president of the Michigan Board of Education and chairman of the study group, said the panel was "trying to move away from the position that says you have to have, for example, four years of English, with no mention at all of what you were supposed to have learned after spending four years in something called 'English.' "

The group's report charges that weaknesses in the curriculum and instruction offered in most schools constitute "the fatal flaw in the American education system." It recommends a major and broad-reaching overhaul of course content, testing, and school organization.

At the heart of its proposed revision would be a core curriculum made up of six broad areas—language arts, mathematics and science, citizenship, fine arts, health, and foreign languages—which would be taught, the report says, in ways "that lead to an understanding of these subjects, rath-

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Private Schools and Reform: E.D. Conferees Urge a Collaboration

By Kirsten Goldberg

WASHINGTON—By sharpening the competition from public schools, education reform has made private schools recognize that "business as usual" may not be enough to meet the increasing demands of parents, students, and teachers, participants at a first-of-its-kind meeting of educators from both sectors said here last week.

Citing ways that the reform movement has already forced changes in private education, participants at the Education Department-sponsored event called for greater public-private collaboration to improve all schools.

The conference, billed as the first attempt to bring together representatives from private and public education to discuss reform, was co-sponsored by the Council for American Private Education, the Council of Chief State School Officers, and the National Association of State Boards of Education.

Secretary of Education Lauro F. Cavazos, addressing the approximately 100 educational leaders who participated, said private schools had been "passed over" in the national reform debate and urged "increased understanding" between the sectors. He praised private education for its accountability to parents and efforts to foster "character development"—two items he said public schools should emulate.

But other speakers noted that "reformed" public schools are already beginning to closely resemble private education—a fact they said could have financial implications.

"If public education continues on its present course and private education rests on its laurels," warned Chester E. Finn Jr., the former assistant secretary of education,

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'Restructuring'

Rochester Public Schools

Rochester, N.Y., is among districts testing new arrangements for students and teachers. A "Reform at 5" report on restructuring and the questions it raises begins on page 7.

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Says coming shortage of minority teachers may be much worse than expected.
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Early-Childhood 'Vision'
A panel of experts calls for separate school units for 4- to 8-year-olds.
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Children in the Cities
Mayors rank drugs, the schools, and inadequate child care top problem areas.
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Capital's Changing Cast
There may be major post-election shifts on key education committees.
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Principal Satisfaction
Despite long hours, growing duties, and pay levels that have been stuck in neutral for a decade, most high-school principals are satisfied with their jobs, according to a new survey. **Page 4.**

Rethinking Early Education
A panel of experts has called for a "new vision" of early-childhood education, in which 4- to 8-year-olds would receive less formal academic instruction in separate school 'units.' **Page 5.**

A Mayoral 'Status Report'
In its first report on the subject of urban children, the U.S. Conference of Mayors cites drug abuse, school problems, and child care as the cities' most troubling issues. **Page 6.**

New York Racism Alleged
Charging that "racism" is dividing the New York State education system into two unequal tiers, a task force has called for allocating more resources to help "at risk" students. **Page 6.**

Los Angeles Testing Brouhaha
Los Angeles teachers, angry over alleged "implications" by school officials that they changed students' state tests, have forced postponement of districtwide achievement tests. **Page 6.**

Anti-Drug Bill Clears
The Congress has approved omnibus legislation increasing funding for school anti-drug programs and allowing the courts to bar drug offenders from receiving student aid. **Page 20.**

Dukakis Education Plan
Gov. Michael S. Dukakis, the Democratic Presidential candidate, has released a package of new and previously announced proposals for improving elementary and secondary education. **Page 20.**

Stafford Looks Back
Retiring Senator Robert T. Stafford of Vermont has seen a fundamental change in attitudes towards the federal role in education during his 28 years in the Congress. **Page 21.**

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ACROSS THE NATION

NATIONAL

New Efforts Mounted Against Steroid Use Among Athletes

The national group Students Against Driving Drunk last week unveiled a program aimed at teaching student athletes about the problems associated with the use of the muscle-enhancing drugs known as steroids.

The program, to be called Student Athletes Detest Drugs, will ask athletes to sign a pledge not to use steroids and other drugs. Robert Anastas, the founder of SADD, said the purpose of the new program is to use student athletes as anti-drug role models for others.

In a related development, the National Football League announced last week that players who tested positive for steroid use more than once would be suspended from play for a month. Third-time offenders could be banned for at least a year.

Meanwhile, a part-time physical-education teacher at a suburban Denver high school was arrested along with six others for smuggling steroids from Mexico.

U.S. Customs officials described the capture of about $100,000 worth of steroids as the largest such seizure they had ever made. Jim Porter, the assistant special agent in charge of the agency's Denver office, said there were "indications" that some of the illegal steroids were being distributed to high-school students.

Humanities Prize To Honor Contributions to the Public

The National Endowment for the Humanities will honor five individuals each year for outstanding contributions to the public's understanding of history, literature, and philosophy, officials have announced.

The agency's new prize is named for Charles Frankel (1917-1979), who had a distinguished career as professor of philosophy, State Department official, author, and host of a network-television program about ideas.

U.S. citizens who have brought the humanities to general audiences through books, public programs, museum exhibitions, films, television, and radio programs will be eligible to receive the $5,000 award.

In her recent report, "Humanities in America," Lynne V. Cheney, director of the N.E.H., called for recognition of scholars who produce high-quality programs for the general public.

Officials are inviting nominations for the first awards from state humanities councils, museums, libraries, historical societies, and other groups. The deadline for applications is Dec. 19, 1988; the first prizes will be awarded in March 1989.

DISTRICTS

Citizens To 'Grade' Detroit Schools In Return for Bond-Issue Support

Detroit public schools will be "graded" monthly by a citizens' education committee under an agreement reached with school officials.

The committee, which was appointed by the school board, agreed in return to endorse three school-funding proposals on the November ballot.

The district is asking voters to raise property taxes and authorize a $160-million bond issue, in order to eliminate this year's projected deficit.

The funding proposals and campaigns for four open seats on the 11-member school board have become the subject of a heated political debate centering on the district's massive budget deficit and poor student-achievement records.

The committee's proposal for monthly "report cards" was designed to allay public concerns that the school system is not being held accountable for the funding it currently receives.

St. Paul Desegregation Plan Features Scholarship Incentives

Students in St. Paul and 25 suburban school districts could earn college scholarship money by participating in a cross-district desegregation plan, under a proposal by David Bennett, the city's superintendent of schools.

The proposal was developed in response to the Minnesota legislature's call for guidance from local school systems on how the state can achieve racial balance in its schools.

Mr. Bennett's proposal anticipates that 3,500 white students could be enticed to transfer from suburban to city schools, and that 3,500 minority students would agree to attend suburban schools.

The proposal would cost the state an estimated $35 million a year. Students could receive up to $11,800 for college expenses.

The plan also calls for the creation of six new magnet schools and efforts to improve racial balance in metropolitan-area housing.

■ **All high schools and middle schools and half of the elementary schools in Dayton, Ohio, would offer specialized "magnet" programs** under a proposal by Franklin Smith, the superintendent.

The proposal is designed to replace the district's 12-year-old court-ordered desegregation plan, which relies on mandatory busing.

The plan must be approved by the school board and the federal judge overseeing the desegregation case before an anticipated five-year phase-in period can begin.

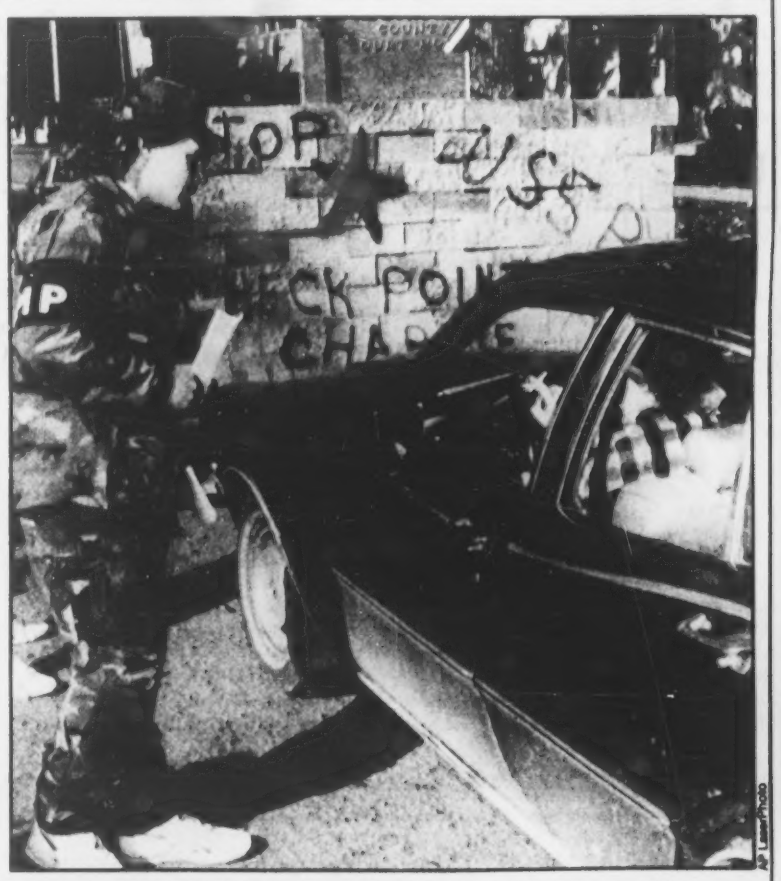
■ **The former superintendent of the Arlington (Tex.) Independent School District and an Arizona computer firm with which the district did business are under investigation by the Texas attorney general's office.**

Donald Wright, who also worked as a consultant for the Prescription Learning Corporation, resigned last month after some employees complained he had pressured them to do business with the company.

Investigators are looking at possible antitrust violations, according to Ron Dusek, a spokesman for Attorney General Jim Mattox. Mr. Dusek declined to be more specific.

In an earlier incident, Mr. Wright had been reprimanded by the school board for failing to disclose his ties to the company at the time it was awarded a $205,000 contract.

■ **Some 1,300 teachers in the Pulaski County (Ark.) Special School District returned to work last week after accepting a contract settlement ordered by a court-appointed master oversee-**



AP/LaserPhoto

CHECKPOINT CHARLIE: Vocational-education students in Jefferson, Ohio, recently donned combat fatigues and stopped motorists at a mock-up of the Berlin Wall to encourage them to exercise their right to vote. Organizers said they hoped to give citizens an idea of what it would be like to live in a police state.

Study Finds Few Minorities Reach The End of 'Educational Pipeline'

By Lynn Olson

WASHINGTON—The impending shortage of minority teachers is "worse than the most informed educators have envisioned," a survey released here last week by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education concludes.

The survey of teacher-preparatory institutions in 47 states and the District of Columbia provides one of the first broad statistical portraits of minority-student enrollment throughout the "education pipeline"—from elementary school through teacher training.

In addition to its compilation of minority-enrollment figures from schools, colleges, and departments of education, the study examines by race and ethnicity the enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools and in postsecondary institutions.

The data show starkly that the "higher the educational level, the fewer minorities there will be," said Eugene E. Eubanks, president of AACTE and dean of the school of education at the University of Missouri-Kansas City.

"The pipeline is clogged at the high-school level," he said, "and we must repair the existing damage or live with the consequences."

A Dwindling Supply

Demographic data indicate that minorities constitute nearly 30 percent of the school-age population, and roughly 33 percent of the pre-school-age population.

But the AACTE survey found that of the undergraduates enrolled in elementary-education programs in the fall of 1987, only 5.3 percent were black, 3.7 percent were Hispanic, and 1.3 percent were Asian.

Of those undergraduates preparing to teach at the high-school level, only 6.3 percent were black, 1.9 percent were Hispanic, and less than 1 percent were Asian.

Problems in retaining minority students at all levels of the education system were evidenced nationally and mirrored in data from the individual states.

- In Michigan, for instance, the black K-12 enrollment is 31 percent, postsecondary enrollment is 9 percent, and enrollment in undergraduate teacher-education programs is 2 percent.
- In Massachusetts, Hispanic K-12 enrollment is 8 percent, postsecondary enrollment is 2 percent, and undergraduate teacher-education enrollment is less than 1 percent.

To prepare the study, AACTE requested enrollment figures for last fall from the nation's 1,272 colleges and universities that prepare teachers. Of those, 638 responded, or approximately 54 percent.

Comparative data for minority enrollment in grades K-12 are from the 1984 and 1986 elementary- and secondary-school civil-rights surveys, conducted by the U.S. Education Department. Postsecondary data are from the report "Trends in Minority Enrollment in Higher Education, Fall 1976-Fall 1986," also published by the federal government.

Preliminary results from the AACTE survey were released last January. *(See Education Week, Jan. 13, 1988.)*

The report focuses on minority enrollment in undergraduate teacher-education programs, which are the primary source of classroom teachers, according to AACTE officials.

But it also includes enrollment data in post-baccalaureate and doctoral-level education programs by race and ethnicity.

In most instances, fewer than 10 percent of students enrolled in such programs were black, Hispanic, or Asian. The most notable exceptions were in such Southern states as Louisiana and Mississippi and in the District of Columbia.

Other Findings

The report found that while 33 states have K-12 minority enrollments of 20 percent or more, only six have minority enrollments in their undergraduate teacher-education programs of 15 percent or more.

Moreover, historically black schools and colleges of education continue to supply a disproportionate number of minority teachers.

These institutions, which constituted fewer than 5 percent of the survey respondents, enroll more than 30 percent of all black undergraduate teacher-education students nationwide.

Undergraduate Education Enrollment By Racial/Ethnic Group and Field, 1987

Field	Total	White*	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Am. Ind.
Elementary	113,208	88.6%	5.3%	3.7%	1.3%	—
Secondary	79,144	89.6	6.3	1.9	—	—
Special	16,214	78.8	11.2	7.7	—	1.8%
Bilingual	812	38.6	6.2	38.6	2.3	4.5
Vocational	8,084	83.2	12.3	1.9	—	1.5
Other	25,122	88.1	7.6	1.9	—	—

* Includes "other."

SOURCE: "Teacher Education Enrollment Survey, Fall 1987," American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

In contrast, the survey found that colleges of education in large public institutions were less racially and ethnically integrated than their smaller counterparts. Mary Dilworth, AACTE's director of research and information services, speculated that this reflected the low proportion of minorities on such campuses in general.

She added that "if you're a black, and you've got the wherewithal to get into the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill" or a similar institution, "the probability that you're going to go into teacher education is slim."

'Massive Effort' Needed

Earlier this year, AACTE proposed a 10-point program to attract more minority students into teaching, ranging from the provision of scholarships and loans to work-study opportunities for high-school students.

Several education-school deans attending a press conference on the report, including the deans of Eastern Michigan University and Norfolk State University, described programs to attract and retain minority students on their campuses.

These include bringing young minority students to campus over several summers to improve their academic skills, creating "future teachers" clubs in inner-city areas, hiring more minority faculty members, providing scholarships and loan programs, and helping minority students pass the tests required for state teacher certification.

Despite these initiatives on the part of individual institutions, Mr. Eubanks cautioned, there is still a "need for a massive effort to address this problem."

The shortage of minority teachers, he suggested, cannot be solved by trying to draw minority students away from schools of law, medicine, or business, but must be accomplished by increasing the number who enter higher education generally.

AACTE officials plan to use this year's survey to provide baseline data for future reports on minority teacher-education enrollments.

Copies of the report, "Teacher Education Pipeline: Schools, Colleges, and Departments of Education Enrollments by Race and Ethnicity," are available for $12 each from AACTE Publications, One Dupont Circle, Suite 610, Washington, D.C. 20036-2412.

Some Reforms Counterproductive for Young, Group Says

By Deborah L. Gold

A panel of educators, child-development experts, and policymakers has set forth a "new vision" for early-childhood education that would create special schools or separate units within schools for 4- to 8-year-olds.

The group also says schools should form partnerships with other early-childhood programs and community agencies to coordinate services for children and their parents.

The National Association of State Boards of Education, which convened the early-childhood-education task force a year ago, endorsed the panel's recommendations at its annual conference in Chicago last week.

The 25-member panel included superintendents, state legislators, noted child-development experts, and leaders of human-services programs.

Its report, "Right From the Start," argues that programs for young children need to be "restructured" because schools have been inattentive to their developmental needs.

The group also charges that education-reform policies have spawned practices that are "inappropriate" for young children, such as an over-reliance on formal academic drills, worksheets, and standardized tests.

"We have adopted a set of policies which, while perhaps appropriate for improving high school, may be less helpful for elementary schools and very young children," says the report. "It may well be the case that making high-school students work harder is an appropriate formulation. It is not clear that lack of effort is the problem for kindergarten students."

Tailoring separate programs—headed by early-childhood specialists—for young children with "similar developmental characteristics" would be a dramatic advance in the field, said Barbara Bowman, a panel member and director of graduate studies at the Erikson Institute in Chicago.

"The notion that we can handle children from age 5 to adolescence [in one setting] and meet the needs of all the children is developmental hogwash," she said. "This would give young children a little more time and less pressure to grow."

Such programs, Ms. Bowman said, also would offer more opportunities to involve parents than do traditional school settings. She added that linkages with social-service and community agencies would help address the external sources of stress that affect families and hinder children's school success.

The Carnegie Corporation of New York has awarded NASBE a $375,000 grant to pilot the panel's proposals in several states.

'Double-Edged Message'

The report notes that national movements are under way to reform education and improve the delivery of services to young children, but it says "the two movements have largely separate origins and leadership."

It also suggests that some school reforms—such as "generic" accountability standards and more teacher specialization—may be counterproductive in the early grades.

Teachers in those grades, the panel notes, "report an increasing use of standardized tests, worksheets and workbooks, ability grouping, retention, and other practices that focus on academic skills too early and in inappropriate ways."

> More time and less pressure to grow needed, it finds.

The report argues that a "legitimate concern about the link between our economic future and the quality of schooling" has fostered a competitive mentality that places undue pressure on young children.

"If education is seen as a contest that pits children against their peers, or a race against our foreign competitors, we risk teaching very young children the wrong academic tasks in an inappropriate fashion."

The panel maintains that current instructional approaches in the early grades send a "double-edged message" by expecting too much in terms of academic requirements but too little in terms of developing creativity and thinking skills.

Such approaches "seem to exemplify an obsession with producing short-term, trivial results rather than developing long-term intellectual and social capacity," the report says.

The NASBE task force says it based its recommendations on a "consensus of professional opinion and research" on what characterizes high-quality early-childhood programs.

Model Approaches Cited

Such programs, the report says, respond to the learning patterns of children within a certain age range; involve parents; and address health, nutrition, child-care, and emotional needs as well as language and cognitive development.

Early-childhood curricula should, the panel suggests, emphasize language development, problem solving, individual and group play, self-control and discipline, sustained interest in activities, attention to adults and peers, intrinsic motivation, and fine and gross motor skills and coordination.

The group endorses "developmentally appropriate" practices outlined by the National Association for the Education of Young Children that promote learning through exploration and play.

The task force offers three different models for providing services for 4- to 8-year-olds.

The first would establish separate schools for that age group staffed by principals, teachers, and community groups committed to developmental principles.

The second would designate early-childhood directors with expertise in the field to head programs in existing schools, and would grant them "substantial authority to develop and support teachers."

A third model would employ a "staffing team" headed by one or more lead teachers.

The panel says schools should hire teachers and early-childhood administrators with appropriate training, provide inservice training, and ensure that teachers in the programs receive wages and benefits comparable to those of other teachers.

Citing the benefits of comprehensive early-childhood programs such as Head Start, the task force says schools should be an "ombudsman" for children and families, and should collaborate with other agencies to offer health and counseling services. It also encourages collaborative efforts to provide prenatal care, parent education, and child care.

One member of the NASBE task force, Lee Etta Powell, superintendent of the Cincinnati public schools, said the panel could have provided more guidance on how public and private providers can collaborate to make better use of space within and outside schools.

She said she also would have favored recommending that all states adopt special certification requirements for early-childhood teachers.

Making developmental principles "pervasive in the early years," noted Richard A. Boyd, Mississippi's state superintendent and a member of the task force, would help address the concern that many principals and teachers "don't really understand basic concepts of what good early-childhood education is."

"The big thing we were trying to do was to send a message that 1st grade is not like 8th grade," he said. "There really are some differences in the cognitive styles" of young children.

They Also Serve: Educators as Solons

Continued from Page 1

identified themselves as educators.

The figure included teachers, former teachers, coaches, school or college administrators, and professors.

Some 16 percent of the lawmakers identified themselves as "attorneys" and 14 percent as "business owners."

But in many states, legislators engaged in "education" outnumber those coming from any other professional background, according to William T. Pound, director of state services for the N.C.S.L.

In Rhode Island, for example, 24 percent of lawmakers are educators, as are 19 percent in Delaware, and 14 percent in Colorado, Indiana, Michigan, Oregon, and West Virginia.

Why educators choose to run for state office, how much time they spend on education issues once they get there, and whether they are viewed as friends or foes by state teachers' unions and other education lobbyists differs markedly, however, from one situation to the next.

'My Life's Experience'

Mr. Pierson, for instance, says that while education is a "significant issue" in his campaign, he has much broader political interests.

"My biggest point is that I've had 24 years—half my life's experience—teaching government," he says, "and I think I know about the process."

Like other teacher-candidates, he has also been active in politics for a long time, serving as a manager for other people's campaigns.

On the other hand, Representative Tina Fallon, chairman of the House education committee in Delaware, says she first ran for office the year after she retired from teaching specifically to influence state education policy.

"I could see the great need for changes in education," says the five-term Republican legislator, "and I felt most of the people who were talking about education . . . really hadn't been on the firing lines. So I thought, 'My gosh, I've had all this experience in three states and one foreign country, and I should get in there and do my 2-cents worth.' "

Other education-legislators describe a deep-seated fascination with politics—often reflected in their careers as high-school history and government teachers—and a desire to "be where the action is," as one lawmaker put it, or the urge to build on their previous political activities.

Representative Gene L. Hoffman of Illinois has been a legislator for 22 years, but he began his political life as a member of the Illinois Education Association.

"I was involved with the Illinois Education Association on teacher-welfare issues," he recalls, "and they kept telling me that you had to go to the legislature to get certain things done. So I decided that I should go to the legislature, and I did."

Since then, the Republican lawmaker, who credits himself with starting the I.E.A.'s political-action committee, says he has had a "falling out" with the teachers' union.

"As I got more involved in the legislative process and tried to look at things on balance, we had a falling out and they do not endorse or support me for re-election anymore," he says. "I just didn't think they were always right."

'Double-Edged Sword'

In fact, education lobbyists say the presence of educators in the legislature can be a "double-edged sword," in the words of Penelope Earley, director of public and governmental relations for the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.

"You either could have a built-in support group," she says, "or people who know the education issue well and have some dissatisfaction with it." The latter she refers to as "loving critics."

For that reason, many in the education community would prefer to have a sympathetic non-educator in the state house, says Paul R. Hubbert, executive secretary of the Alabama Education Association.

"It's probably easier to work with a layperson," he contends, "because sometimes people in education hold honest differences of opinion that may be very difficult to overcome."

Of the 140 legislators in Alabama, 58 are either educators, retired educators, or their spouses—a fact that some observers contend favors Mr. Hubbert.

But the union leader argues that the number of educators in the state house does not necessarily translate into votes. The political influence of his own union—which represents 92 percent of the state's classroom teachers—is more important, he asserts.

"I think most issues get decided on things other than whether [a legislator] is a teacher or not," he says.

And education-legislators "are not necessarily always together" in any case, notes Senator Rod Monroe of Oregon, a former public-school teacher. "They all tend to be supporters of education, but they often differ on collective-bargaining issues, on issues involving mandates to the school district, and so on."

Sometimes, they even find themselves voting for education bills they disagree with. Representative Barbara Perea Casey of New Mexico, for example, tells of backing home schooling, which she opposes, because her constituency supported it.

"It didn't make me a happy person," she recalls, "but I feel that I'm here to represent my constituents and I do what they want."

An 'Important' Link

But while the votes of education-legislators cannot be predicted on any single issue, their presence is beneficial to the school community over the long run, others suggest, because they tend to be better informed and more sensitive to educators' concerns.

In Minnesota, for example, 11 percent of the state's part-time legislators are educators. Rose A. Hermodson, director of legislation for the Minnesota Federation of Teachers, says that does make a difference, because prior to and immediately following each legislative session, these lawmakers are "back in the classroom teaching."

Two years ago, when the Minnesota legislature passed a bill to fund teacher centers across the state, one of the lawmakers who spoke in favor of the measure was himself the director of a teachers' center, she recalls.

Education-legislators also "cut through a lot of the untruths and misunderstandings that people have about the schools," contends Harvey B. Press, president of the Rhode Island Education Association.

And Damon P. Moore, president of the Indiana State Teachers Association, says they generally understand the need for "friends of education."

He adds, however, that "every now and then, even teachers fall prey to the most dreaded disease of the legislature: amnesia."

"They forget whence they came," he says, "Sometimes, we must remind them that they have more information than some of their colleagues, and they are professionally obligated to continue to use their teaching tools."

A Mixed Blessing

For their part, state lawmakers say that being an educator can be both a help and a hindrance.

Representative Hoffman of Illinois says that as a former teacher, he knows "what works and what doesn't work" and is able to avoid the "unintended" negative consequences of education proposals.

But others note that they have had to prove themselves to non-education peers, many of whom have little respect for teachers and view them as having a vested interest in education.

Senator Regis F. Groff of Colorado, an administrator with the Denver Public Schools, is serving his 14th year in the legislature. But while he has always been interested in education issues, he says, he did not focus on them early in his political career.

"I'm black, so I had to be concerned with trying to convince the legislature that I had an interest that transcended just social issues," he says. "You walk in, and the first thing they think you're going to talk about is welfare and housing and education."

To overcome that image, Senator Groff chose to work on consumer-rights issues, like insurance, "just so I could be seen as someone who knew something about other issues."

Even today, he asserts, his colleagues view him with mixed emotions. "They can't deny that I have a little better frame of reference to look at the issues involving education," he says. "On the other hand, they certainly think that I have a vested interest—almost a conflict of interest—and, therefore, they are suspicious or cautious."

Conflict of Interest?

Debates about whether education-legislators have a "conflict of interest"—and should be prevented from running for public office or voting on certain issues—have arisen sporadically in various states.

Earlier this year, the New Mexico attorney general ruled that Representative Casey could not run for re-election while continuing to teach in the public schools. According to the ruling, public-school teachers are state employees, and state employees cannot serve in the legislature.

Two courts later overturned the ruling, based on the fact that teachers are employed by local school boards, and not by the state. And Ms. Casey is continuing her bid for re-election, even though the attorney general has asked the state appeals court to review the case.

Representative Casey's husband, Frank Casey, describes the experience as "pure unadulterated hell."

"Educators here have just been beat into the ground," he says. "It's a sin."

In Alabama, the conflict-of-interest debate is always simmering just beneath the surface, according to Melvin G. Cooper, executive director of the state ethics commission. Many educators, including university presidents, now sit in the legislature and participate in debates and votes that affect their institutions.

Three years ago, the ethics commission tried to prevent teachers or their spouses from voting on legislation that would provide insurance coverage or pay raises for public-school employees. But the Supreme Court of Alabama ruled that a public-school employee in the legislature could vote on such bills, as long as he was not affected by the measure "in a way different from . . . other members of the class to which he belonged."

Mr. Cooper still maintains that there is a clear conflict of interest involved in such votes. Education-legislators, he asserts, "tend to see a number of important issues with tunnel vision—'How will this affect education?'—and not every piece of legislation should be viewed that way."

'Virtually Everyone Has Them'

Others argue that educators have no greater conflict of interest than farmers who vote on agricultural bills, or bankers who vote on banking measures.

"Virtually everybody in the legislature has conflicts of interest," says Alan Rosenthal, director of the Eagleton Institute of Politics at Rutgers University. "If they didn't, they wouldn't be breathing."

"I think the only thing you can do with conflicts is, for the most part, disclose them," he says. "If people know where you're coming from, that's sufficient."

In addition, Mr. Rosenthal argues, most legislative issues are decided long before they come to the floor for a vote. "If you really wanted to prevent conflicts of interest, you wouldn't let the person speak, talk to associates, or in any way advocate a point of view," he says, "and that's clearly out of the question."

In the majority of states, the presence of educators in the legislature does not appear to be a controversial issue. But in at least some, educators and others are prohibited from collecting "dual salaries" during the days the legislature meets. And in a few instances, they cannot vote on issues that would benefit them directly.

In Alabama, for example, legislators cannot receive two salaries on the same day, so most of them refuse their legislative pay—$10 a day—when there is a conflict. Mr. Cooper notes that these same lawmakers get to keep their much higher expense allowance of $85 a day.

Salary, Time Conflicts

Until recently, state legislators' salaries were hardly an inducement to serve in public office, particularly in part-time legislatures.

In the last few years, however, that situation has begun to change, especially in states with lengthy legislative sessions, like California, Illinois, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin.

When Mr. Hoffman first ran for office in Illinois, he recalls, the pay was $7,500 annually, which barely covered his leave of absence.

"It didn't make a big hit in my income," he says, "because every day I was gone from school, I didn't get paid."

Now, Illinois legislators can earn as much as $35,000 annually, he notes, and many educators who run for public office pledge to become full-time lawmakers if they win.

As of early 1986, legislative salaries ranged from $100 annually in New Hampshire to $46,800 in Alaska, with the average being just over $17,000. In addition, lawmakers in all but six states receive a per diem allowance when in session or when on legislative business.

Compared with other professionals, educators might find this supplemental salary attractive, political observers suggest. Many lawyers can earn far more in private practice, they say, and are finding it increasingly difficult to balance their job demands with lengthy legislative sessions.

Most education-legislators interviewed last week, however, described the pay as a minimal inducement. And they said that it was often offset by the time demanded of them.

Senator Monroe of Oregon has been in the legislature for 12 years, and taught high school for nine of those. When the legislature was in session, he would take an unpaid leave from his job, he says, and "take a day off here, a day off there" for interim responsibilities.

Eventually, the pace became too bruising, Mr. Monroe says, and he was missing too many political meetings and speaking engagements scheduled during the day.

"I found that the legislature, as I was elevated to leadership positions, was almost a full-time responsibility," explains the lawmaker, who is assistant majority leader of the Oregon Senate. "I couldn't really do justice to either job by trying to maintain a classroom-teaching profession, so I went to part-time college teaching and administration."

Mr. Pierson of Colorado, on the other hand, maintains that if he wins, he wants to continue teaching his first-period class when the legislature is in session. It will be over at 8:20 A.M., he estimates, and the session at the capitol will commence "at around 9:00."

Lacks 'Political Punch'

But if Mr. Pierson hopes to climb the path to political power, education is probably not the way to get there, according to experts.

In general, education committees are not seen as particularly powerful, despite the recent surge of school reforms and the high proportion of state revenue spent on education.

Says Representative Jim F. Stoicheff, House Minority Leader in Idaho and a "teaching principal": "When you first go into the legislature, many of the freshmen will serve on education—particularly in the House—because it's not an important committee."

"It's called a major committee, it meets the same time as the other committees, but it just doesn't seem to have any punch politically," he says. "And you actually get more done for education if you serve on the finance committee, or the revenue and taxation committee, or state affairs."

Nation's State Legislators By Occupation, 1986

Attorney	16%
Business owner	14%
Full-time legislator	11%
Agriculture	10%
Retired	7%
Education:	
Teacher/Coach	6%
Principal/Administrator	1%
College Administrator	1%
College Professor	1%
Business:	
Manager/Executive	6%
Nonmanagerial	5%
Real estate	4%
Insurance	3%
Misc. professionals	3%
Medical	2%
Communications/Arts	2%
Homemaker	2%
Accountant	1%
Engineer/Architect/ Scientist	1%
Local-government employee	1%
Not known or other	4%

SOURCE: "State Legislators' Occupations: A Decade of Change," National Conference of State Legislatures